

Holy Thursday

April 6, 2023

Reflection by Sister Judith Murphy, OSB

Ex 12:1-8, 11-14; 1 Cor 11:23-26; Jn 13:1-15

Our blessing cup is a communion with the blood of Christ.

In the breaking of the bread, we have come to know the Lord.

This week in our church is foundational for the entire liturgical year, and foundational also for the sacramental life of our church. Tonight we mark Jesus' last supper with his followers and companions; and we also repeat this sacred meal in his memory throughout the liturgical year. Tonight in our opening song, we sang, "In the breaking of the bread, we have come to know the Lord." And as the refrain to the psalm verses, we sang, Our blessing cup is a communion with the blood of Christ."

We come here willingly throughout the year, for the nourishment offered us in this cup and on this plate. We bring to this table our concerns, our goals, our offerings, our petitions, and our hopes, our aspirations. We come to celebrate the salvation story of Jesus the Son of God, for humanity. And as we celebrate his story we agree to be incorporated into the story, to be baptized into Christ. We come to realize and accept that our communion with the blood of Christ and with the broken bread has implications for our lives.

In the Exodus reading, God's people set off on a journey that changes life for them. They *become the people of the covenant* written on their hearts: They will be God's people, and God will be their God. As their descendants, we're invited to take part in this journey too, to grow into being the people of God in and for our world. We heard Paul tell the church at Corinth and us that when we accept this body and blood, we are entering into a new covenant and we take it "in remembrance of Jesus." And in accepting the offer we may sometimes know the implications of

being bread that is broken and given as nourishment for others// and of being the blood poured out. If I have washed your feet, you ought to do this for one another.

Pope Francis invites us as church to be a different kind of church, a church that looks like “synodality”—from a Greek word that means “a shared journey.” ...to be God’s people, for the sake of God’s world. This journey is marked by a commitment to discipleship, to following Christ where he leads us through the impulse of the Spirit. Not unlike Benedict’s call to “listen with the ear of the heart.” And not unlike the Radical Hospitality that our world sorely needs.

May we welcome a new springtime in our faith and hope and love and welcome this time of renewal.